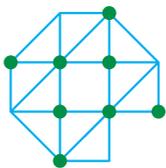


Blend your education

# From goal to tool

Instruction



## Acceleration plan

Educational innovation  
with ICT



Facilitating professional  
development of lecturers

## From goal to tool

TARGET GROUP	Lecturers and support departments
FORM	List of sources and rubric
TIME NEEDED	Variable
LEVEL	Course, programme, institution

### Background

The application landscape for education is vast and only continues to grow. So it is only natural that users sometimes can't see the wood for the trees. Lecturers need an up-to-date overview of educational applications – or tools – that they can (and may) use. However, they are often not entirely familiar with their own institution's internal offerings and therefore look online for tools that match their intended goals. The consequences of using these tools, such as issues around privacy, security or procurement, are not always taken into consideration. It is therefore important to create clarity about the range of tools available and how lecturers can use them safely. Many institutions have therefore created databases and useful overviews, such as [Blendy](#) or the [Tool Wheel](#).

### Method

To avoid reinventing the wheel, this product includes an overview of databases for tools developed by institutions themselves. It is advisable to look for similar overviews at your own institution first. If these do not exist, other institutions' databases may inspire you, both in terms of tool choice and in creating your own overview. Always check first with your own institution whether you are free to use such a tool. This is because of the strict rules under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Once you have found a tool and want to vet it for usability for your context, you can use the handy rubric in the annex. Using the criteria in that instrument, you can rate the tool on several categories, such as technological, functional, safety and pedagogical aspects.



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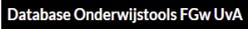


**Acceleration plan**  
Educational innovation  
with ICT



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## Overzicht van tool databases

	<p><b>DiDi - Digital Didactics</b></p> <p>A handy overview that starts from a working form to then lead you to an overview of possible tools. Each working form is described in detail, including characteristics like group size, duration and level of thinking.</p>
	<p><b>Tool Wheel</b></p> <p>Maastricht University's Tool Wheel is a smart and interactive survey that starts with the question: what do you want your students to do? Based on that question, you end up with an overview of tools with instant insight into which tool is licensed and which is not.</p>
	<p><b>Tools.Avans.nl</b></p> <p>This is an interactive database of Avans University of Applied Sciences. Users seeking a tool can ask a question and leave reviews. It is also possible to share real-life experiences in blog form.</p>
	<p><b>Tool Finder</b></p> <p>UTwente's Tool Finder is a database where you can quickly find a tool matching a specific goal in different ways. There are a number of categories and three different views: list, grid and summary.</p>
	<p><b>Educational tools A-Z</b></p> <p>This is an overview of tools by Zuyd University of Applied Sciences, along with a description of the working form for which it is best suited.</p>
	<p><b>Blendy</b></p> <p>Blendy, a database by Saxion, contains both tools and working forms. It has convenient filter options to help you quickly find the right tool for your purpose.</p>
	<p><b>Database of Educational Tools</b></p> <p>The Faculty of Humanities at the University of Amsterdam has created a comprehensive overview of teaching tools and working forms with handy overviews and features.</p>

## Tip: Educational Applications project

It is important for institutions to understand and have control over the use of educational applications by lecturers and students. This may concern licensing costs, but also potential risks when using applications. It is especially important for information managers involved in selecting educational applications and providing information and support on these applications. This is why SURF is involved with the [Educational Applications](#) project, which works towards a solution that makes the wealth of information on tools accessible. This allows institutions to quickly and easily create different overviews for different target groups:

- **Analytics View**  
Gives insight to management on the available tools and the tools that are used.
- **Landscaping View**  
Helps the information manager put together the application landscape.
- **Lecturer tools View**  
Gives lecturers and students insight into what tools are available, but also which ones should not be used and why.

## About the GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) came into effect in May 2016 and has been enforced since May 2018. Much of the responsibility for personal data is placed on the organisation. This means that as a lecturer, you also have accountability. This has implications for the digital tools you can use in your education. You can still use tools, of course, but this is subject to certain conditions.

It is therefore strongly advised to always contact the information managers at your own institution before using a tool. They are aware of the privacy and security guidelines that apply in the organisation and can help in selecting tools. You can read more about the [GDPR in education on the SURF website](#).

## Evaluating tools

To help lecturers evaluate tools for usability, EDUCAUSE has developed two resources. EDUCAUSE is SURF's US affiliate institute in the area of educational innovation with IT. Both tools assume that you have a clear idea of the goals you want to achieve with the tool. Does it involve, for example, creating interactive videos, facilitating formative assessment, having students maintain a digital portfolio, and so on. This is an important point of departure.

### Rubric for eLearning Tool Evaluation

The first resource is the [Rubric for eLearning Tool Evaluation](#) (PDF). This consists of eight categories with associated criteria. For each criterion, it is assessed whether the technology is effective and if there are any minor or major concerns. It may also be that the criterion does not apply. The rubric describes instances where a tool is effective and instances where there may be concerns. The criteria align well with blended learning and community learning. Thus, not only functionality and accessibility are considered, but also 'social presence', 'cognitive presence' and 'teaching presence' as set out in the Community of Inquiry model are part of the assessment criteria (for more information on this model, see the 'Socialising in blended learning' product).

The categories and criteria are:

- **Functionality:** scale, ease of use, available tech support/assistance, hypermediality.
- **Accessibility:** accessibility standards, user-focused participation, required equipment, cost of use.
- **Technical:** embedding in/integration with the LMS, desktop/laptop operating system, browser, additional downloads.
- **Mobile design:** access, functionality, offline access.
- **Privacy, data protection and rights:** sign up login, data privacy and ownership, archiving/saving/exporting data.
- **Social presence:** collaboration, user accountability, diffusion/broad dissemination.
- **Teaching presence:** facilitation, customisation, learning analytics.
- **Cognitive presence:** enhancement of cognitive tasks, higher-order thinking, megacognitive engagement.

### Rubric for Active Learning Technology Evaluation

The second resource is the [Rubric for Active Learning Technology Evaluation](#). In doing so, the compilers took their cue from the eLearning Tool Evaluation rubric described above, but shifted the focus to 'active learning'. The first two categories with associated criteria are:

- **Ease of use:** easy to learn, easy to configure.
- **Participation:** multiple users simultaneously, multimodal.

For these two categories, the tool to be evaluated can only succeed or fail. Rating for the other categories and criteria is different, and it may be that a given criterion does not apply. The categories and criteria are:

- **Widely available:** sign up and login with attention to single sign-on, device support, additional downloads, cost of use.
- **Equitable:** accessibility standards, including with respect to identity of learners.
- **Flexible:** hypermediality, scaling and grouping, adaptability.
- **Suitable for active learning activities:** instructor presence, interruptible – lecturer can focus attention – and sharing of content.

### If you would like to find out more, see the following (in Dutch):

- [More information about SURF's Educational Applications Platform project](#)
- [Resource for finding tools you can use for online teaching](#)

## Justification and sources

In blended learning, the emphasis is often on IT and digitalisation. This is a pity, because it is not about more tools or more digital technology, but about facilitating learning processes. It is and remains, therefore, an educational issue. Therefore, evaluating a tool should not only be about technical aspects but, more importantly, about pedagogical aspects. It is for this reason that the two rubrics in this product were chosen, both of which also touch on the educational issue.

Educause Review (2018). *A rubric for evaluating e-learning tools in higher education*. Consulted on 8 May 2022 at [er.educause.edu/articles/2018/9/a-rubric-for-evaluating-e-learning-tools-in-higher-education](https://er.educause.edu/articles/2018/9/a-rubric-for-evaluating-e-learning-tools-in-higher-education)

Digitale HU (2022). *WHAT TOOLS CAN YOU USE FOR ONLINE EDUCATION? (in Dutch)*. Consulted on 8 May 2022 at [husite.nl/digitalehu/afstandsonderwijs/welke-tools-kan-je-gebruiken/](https://husite.nl/digitalehu/afstandsonderwijs/welke-tools-kan-je-gebruiken/)

Rubens, W. (2022). *Tools that can help you select learning technology (blog in Dutch)*. Consulted on 22 May 2022 at [www.te-learning.nl/blog/tools-die-je-kunnen-ondersteunen-bij-de-selectie-van-leertechnologie/](https://www.te-learning.nl/blog/tools-die-je-kunnen-ondersteunen-bij-de-selectie-van-leertechnologie/)



*The Acceleration Plan for Educational Innovation with ICT is a four-year programme focused on bringing initiatives, knowledge, and experiences for digitalisation together. The programme is an initiative of SURF, the Netherlands Association of Universities of Applied Sciences, and the Association of Universities, and is organised in eight acceleration zones. In the zone Facilitating professional development for lecturers, 16 institutions are working on improving the professional development of lecturers in Dutch higher education.*



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